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ABSTRACT

This book, written by a father of school-aged children, challenges the idea that school reform must be based on raising test scores. Rather, it asserts that school reform should start by deciding what kind of students it wants to produce and then designing schools that will allow students to develop accordingly. The book advocates a child-centered curriculum that encourages children to explore and learn at their own pace. Schools must foster the following qualities necessary for the development of independent and self-governing young people: a love of freedom, joy in learning, a sense of control over their lives, and a sense of community. Parents and other groups must therefore challenge the instructional design and bureaucracy of the current educational system. True reform, it is argued, will occur only when the government-school monopoly is eradicated. To accomplish this, parents and others must demand meaningful choice in education. Concrete ways to work for change are suggested: (1) visit a child-centered school; (2) talk with students and parents; (3) work to start a child-centered school; (4) share your commitment; (5) encourage voucher legislation; (6) support a voucher initiative; and (7) work from the outside. (LMI)

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